



City Councilmember  
**Carl DeMaio**

**News Release**

## **DeMaio Calls for Public Vote on New City Hall Proposal**

*Commitment Would Maximize Public Input and Increase Transparency of Deal Terms*

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SAN DIEGO – With the City Council poised to vote on whether to enter into negotiations with a developer to build a new City Hall, City Councilmember Carl DeMaio today called on the City Council to include a requirement that any deal negotiated for a new City Hall be put to a vote of the public in the 2010 election. DeMaio – the lead critic of the proposed new City Hall – noted that taxpayers should have the ultimate say on whether to proceed with the pricey project.

“My goal is to provide taxpayers with the maximum protection and participation in this decision – and a public vote is the best way to accomplish that. Moreover, it appears the City Charter may require a public vote on this kind of project as well”

DeMaio points to language in the City Charter (Section 90.3) that states: *“The City may not enter into the agreements necessary for financing, development, and construction of a major public project that confers a significant private benefit, unless that project is submitted to a vote at a municipal election and a majority of those voting in that election approve the project.”*

“My concern is the negotiators will agree to terms that may not be as favorable to city taxpayers out of a desire to avoid the public vote requirements called for in the City Charter. The City Council should commit up front to a public vote on the project as part of any decision to enter into an ‘Exclusive Negotiating Agreement’ with a city hall developer,” DeMaio commented.

Further, documents provided at the May 20, 2009 board meeting of the Center City Development Corporation confirmed DeMaio’s concern – when a lawyer for CCDC noted that a public vote could be avoided depending on the “ultimate terms of the agreement, partnership structure, and development program.”

In addition to calling for the City Council to commit to the public vote up front, DeMaio is asking the City Attorney to outline the criteria by which Charter Section 90.3 would require a public vote. DeMaio also recommended that the City Council require a study team to be formed to work on a separate track from the redevelopment negotiations to outline 2-3 “Hold Steady” alternatives to building a new City Hall for the City Council to consider when analyzing whatever deal comes out of the negotiations.

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